



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Tom Horne
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

CN# 03-05

MEMORANDUM

To: School Health & Nutrition Program Sponsors

From: Mary Szafranski, Deputy Associate Superintendent
Arizona Department of Education, Health & Nutrition Unit

Holly Mohr, Program Director
Arizona Department of Education, School Health & Nutrition Programs

Date: August 17, 2004

RE: Free/Reduced Price Meal Eligibility Duration, 2004 Reauthorization

Based on the Reauthorization Act of 2004 for Child Nutrition Programs, **households with students eligible for free and reduced price meals will not be required to submit a new application if income and/or family size change mid-year.** Therefore, the free/reduced price applications that are approved at the beginning of the 2004/2005 school year are valid for the entire year.

How does it work?

- Approve household eligibility for free and reduced price meals the same way.
- Households approved for benefits in the 2004/2005 school year will remain eligible for benefits no longer than 30 days after the first day of the 2005/2006 school year **or** until the household is approved for free and reduced price meals for the 2005/2006 school year, whichever comes first.
- * Households are **no longer required** to report changes for the following:
 - Increase in income of \$50 per month (\$600 annually).
 - Decrease in household size.
 - When a household is no longer eligible for food stamps or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

The following **exceptions** apply:

- When free/reduced price application eligibility determination was incorrect.
- When approved household income does not support actual verified household income.
- When a household is given temporary approval of free/reduced price meals.
- * **If a household contacts the local education agency (LEA) with an updated application because their income and/or family size changed mid-year, you must accept this application and determine eligibility based on the current information.**

How does this affect **Direct Certification**?

- Directly certified students are eligible for free meals for the entire school year. If **mid-year**, a household contacts the LEA with an income application because they are no longer receiving DES benefits, the LEA must accept this application and determine eligibility based on the current information.

The Arizona Department of Education has updated all free/reduced price meal applications and parent letters as of August 13, 2004. However, if you printed the applications/parent letters prior to being updated, you do **not** have to use the updated forms. If you printed the forms after August 13th, we request that you use the updated forms; this is not required.

At this time, the Arizona Department of Education does not have further guidance on this issue and is awaiting final regulation from the USDA.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this memo, please contact your assigned School Health & Nutrition Program Specialist (602) 542-8700.